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ABSTRACT

Multiyear teaching is part of an ongoing interest in ways of organizing schools to best support the social and academic aims of education. Here, teachers are assigned to follow the same class as their students move together from one grade level to the next. In the first of three sections, the potential benefits of multiyear teaching are introduced and their source located in one of the hallmarks of this approach--the continuity of relationships. This section's purpose is to engage readers with the important question of why schools and teachers would want to consider multiyear teaching in the first place. The second section provides an overview of research on multiyear teaching and how this approach is being used either by itself or in combination with other forms of school restructuring. Although the volume of literature on this topic is not large, findings generally support the benefits of long-term student-teacher relationships. The connections between multiyear teaching and contemporary issues related to student diversity, citizenship, and moral education are examined in the third section. (Contains 39 endnotes, 24 references, and 29 resource websites.) (RT)

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MULTIYEAR TEACHING:
The Case for Continuity

By David J. Flinders
and Nel Noddings

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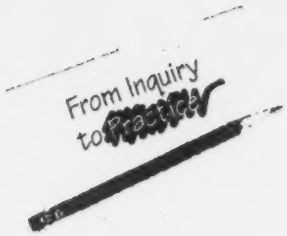

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MULTIYEAR TEACHING: The Case for Continuity

By David J. Flinders and Nel Noddings

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INTRODUCTION

Multiyear teaching, an approach through which educators seek to promote the benefits of long-term, stable relationships, is part of an ongoing interest in ways of organizing schools to best support the social and academic aims of education. It is often viewed as similar to multi-age classrooms and nongraded elementary schools. The difference, however, is that multiyear teaching does not require schools to group students of different ages together in a single class. Instead, teachers are assigned to follow the same class as their students move together from one grade level to the next.

We present our discussion in three sections. In the first section, "Staying Together: Speaking from Experience,"[3] Nel Noddings introduces the potential benefits of multiyear teaching and locates their source in one of the hallmarks of this approach — the continuity of relationships. Nodding's discussion is based on her work and personal experience. Its purpose is to engage readers with the important question of why schools and teachers would want to consider multiyear teaching in the first place. In the second section, we provide an overview of research on multiyear teaching and how this approach is being used either by itself or in combination with other forms of school restructuring.[1] Although the volume of literature on this topic is not large, findings generally support the benefits of long-term student-teacher relationships. We examine the connections between multiyear teaching and contemporary issues related to student diversity, citizenship, and moral education in the third section.

For an overview of multiyear teacher-student groupings, visit www.ericeece.org/pubs/digests/1997/burke97.html, website of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

STAYING TOGETHER: SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

My interest in keeping students and teachers together for several years arises from two sources: personal experience and an analysis of likely benefits. The research on practice that we will review later does not contradict what I have learned through many years of teaching.

I have been writing about and recommending *continuity* in student-teacher relationships for years.[2] There now seems to be more widespread professional interest in the idea, and some elementary schools have instituted a practice called "looping" in which a teacher starts with a group of, say, first graders and moves along with them through third grade. She then returns to first grade for a new group of students. The designation "looping" is a bit unfortunate for two reasons: it focuses on the teacher's experience, and it overlooks the possibility of providing the benefits of continuity at the secondary school level.

To be sure, the teacher's experience can be quite wonderful. Although I was trained as a secondary school mathematics teacher, my first year of teaching I was assigned to a self-contained sixth-grade class. I loved it. What fun it was to revisit childhood literature and all the historical topics I had enjoyed as a child. At the end of the year, because the junior high school was overcrowded, the students and I were asked if we would consider staying together for another year. Now here is a very important point: *the decision required mutual consent.* No child should be forced to stay with a teacher he or she dislikes. We added a few more students in seventh grade; at the year's end, we were asked to continue for yet another year, and we did. Those three wonderful years have had significant effects on my educational philosophy. A bit of serendipity: Just after I was asked to write this piece, I heard from four of the students in that first class. Their memories, like mine, are warm.

In the years after that, I taught high school mathematics in another community. There, again, I had the opportunity to work with the same students for three or four years. Educators and policymakers today talk incessantly about "accountability." It is a somewhat shallow and

formal concept that forces us to report on, or "account" for, our professional decisions and student outcomes to the people above us in the hierarchy. In contrast, when a teacher has taken charge of the complete mathematical education of students in their high school years, she knows that *responsibility* is the concept to be emphasized. The weight of accounting to a system or superior is feather-light compared to the responsibility one accepts for these young people and their mathematical development. Working together for several years puts the emphasis where it should be — on professional and personal responsibility.

Such arrangements are not attractive to all teachers. Mathematics teachers must be prepared to teach the whole mathematics curriculum, and they must be willing to accept three, four, or five different preparations. I loved the intellectual stimulation of multiple preparations, but not everyone wants to do this. However, for those willing to undertake it, the experience provides rigorous learning for teachers as well as students. One might wish that every high school should have at least a few teachers who know the curriculum of their subjects thoroughly. Such teachers can bring new continuity to the curriculum or gain an understanding of its present continuity; their students experience continuity of both relationships and subject matter.

Consider the potential advantages and disadvantages of multiyear grouping by reading the MAGnet Newsletter at www.ericeece.org/pubs/mag/magfal95.html.

It is worth mentioning, too, that the practice of keeping students and teachers together for several years, although relatively rare in the United States, is common in Japan and many European nations.[3] It is recognized in countries that use the plan regularly that teachers must accept great responsibility not only for the academic progress of their students but also for their moral development. Children will do things for people they love and admire, and those things can be either good or bad. This observation raises a legitimate concern. Teachers must be persons of demonstrably high moral standards.

Another argument is sometimes made against multiyear student-teacher relationships. There are those who argue against keeping a teacher with the same students for several years because, they say, students need the experience of meeting (even coping with!) multiple teacher personalities. But consider: We certainly would not argue that children should change parents regularly so that they can learn a variety of parenting styles. That relationship is too intimate, too central to our lives, even to consider such manipulation. But so is the teacher-student relationship. Next to parents, teachers play the most important role in the lives of many children. The benefits of continuity far outweigh those of variety.

Through years of work as a university professor, my faith in the continuity of relationships has deepened. Next to their own talent and industry, nothing is more important to the success of doctoral students than the relationship formed with an interested and supportive advisor. Working together for four or more years, students and professor both grow, and often a lifetime friendship is born.

Now I will turn to a summary of the likely benefits of having students and teacher stay together for several years.

- Students gain a sense of belonging, of being cared for. The arrangement should be entered by mutual consent. If it is, a bond of real affection is likely to grow among students and between teacher and students.
- The close relationship that develops facilitates guidance. It is possible in the second or third year of a relationship to talk with students in a way that might be regarded as intrusive in a single year. Teachers know better how and when to approach a particular child on sensitive matters, and the child is more likely to accept such guidance.
- The close relationship facilitates the teaching of subject matter. Teachers come to know more about students' interests, learning styles, background knowledge, and work habits.

Both diagnosis and remediation are made more easily and accurately. Students should do as well, or better, on achievement measures than peers who move from teacher to teacher every year.

- Even in the frustrating and fatiguing last weeks of the school year, teachers are likely to "stay with" the task of genuine teaching. "These kids are coming back to me in September!" That realization is a marvelous incentive to work for continuous progress.
- In a similar vein, interesting suggestions can be made for summer activities — not homework in the formal sense! There should be no coercion here — just a preview of what we may talk about and share in September.
- The start of school in September is so much easier. At the elementary school, the teacher knows all the students' names. It is a joyful reunion. If there is a new child, that person almost automatically gets special attention. At the high school, the teacher has only one or two new classes; the others are "returnees." Teacher and students can get right down to work, picking up where they left off in June.
- The practice is enormously satisfying for teachers. We can see very clearly what we have accomplished. It tends to give us, as teachers, the very rewards for which we entered the profession.
- The practice stretches the knowledge of teachers. It is worth more, by way of increasing teacher competence, than a series of expensive workshops.
- Problems with the curriculum — disjunctures, omissions, unnecessary repetitions, misplaced emphases, deficiencies in materials for individual variation — may be discovered and addressed.
- The responsibility is enormous. I list this as a benefit because, when such responsibility is accepted, the demand for formal accountability may be greatly reduced. Closely related to this is the possibility that trust will be greatly increased. This, too, should reduce the need for formal measures of accountability.
- There are no monetary costs!

For more information about multiage teaching, see the website of the National Association of Elementary School Principals at www.naesp.org/comm/p0399a.htm.

RESEARCH ON MULTIYEAR TEACHING

Is there evidence, beyond logic and common sense, that students and teachers benefit from staying together more than one year? The short answer to this question is that the research on multiyear teaching offers reasonably strong support for the full array of benefits already identified. While the volume of literature is not as extensive as we would like for it to be, results of studies repeatedly suggest social benefits that range from teacher job satisfaction to positive student attitudes. Moreover, some findings indicate that these social benefits carry over to academic performance as well. It may be the case, for example, that long-term relationships promote motivation, problem solving, and other factors associated with student achievement.

In the first part of this section, we examine research on the academic benefits of multiyear teaching. We assume that such benefits are indirect, because multiyear teaching is a form of school organization, not a form of instruction *per se*. Yet, given the emphasis so often placed on student achievement, it is not surprising that several researchers have examined this variable as a possible outcome of multiyear teaching. In the second part of this section, we review research on the social benefits of multiyear teaching. Studies in this category have examined attendance rates, discipline, and similar factors, as well as the perceptions of teachers, students, and parents.

Academic Benefits

Although a number of studies reviewed here suggest a positive relationship between multiyear teaching and student achievement, we urge caution in interpreting this research. Overstating these conclusions is unwise for two reasons: First, very few studies have focused specifically on the academic or cognitive effects of multiyear teaching. In addition, these studies tend to be small-scale investigations involving a single school or pilot program. Reports of small-scale studies often lack detailed descriptions of how the research was carried out. In such cases, it may be difficult to determine if the results of a study can be generalized to the entire population under investigation. Second, researchers have always found it difficult to pin down the specific causes of student achievement. At the middle school level, where much of the achievement research on multiyear teaching has been done, as well as in high schools where multiyear assignments are often part of a school-within-a-school program, researchers find it especially difficult to disentangle the effects of multiyear teaching from the effects of other program characteristics.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development offers another perspective on the academic benefits of multiyear teaching at www.ascd.org/readingroom/edupdate/1998/1mar.html.

Blending multiyear teaching with other arrangements is a strategy that offers both advantages and disadvantages. Many middle schools, for example, have combined multiyear assignments with team teaching, an approach that allows these schools to provide subject matter experts and still maintain continuity. This use of multiyear teaching may also reduce the concern that students otherwise would be "under-exposed" to diverse teaching styles and personalities. In such programs, it is hoped that every student will find a special teacher on the team, someone to remain connected with over several years. However, the possibility that this may not happen is a concern, and it should be made explicit among teachers involved in this type of arrangement.

With these caveats in mind, we now turn to the achievement studies on multiyear teaching. Paul S. George and John H. Lounsbury recently completed one of the most comprehensive reviews of research in this area.[4] These authors cite six studies of different programs in which the use of multiyear teaching was a primary or leading characteristic. Among these six studies, three included efforts to gauge the effects of the program on academic achievement. The first study included 400 seventh- and eighth-grade students at a Connecticut middle school.[5] A comparison of language arts grades at the school favored students in the multiyear group. The study also reported a statistically significant difference favoring the multiyear students on an eighth-grade statewide test of writing.

A second study of academic achievement was reported as a collaborative project between East Cleveland Schools and Cleveland State University. The focus of this study was on a pilot program that adopted multiyear assignments as one of its components. Daniel L. Burke originally reviewed the findings, concluding, "Students in the program exhibited substantially higher reading and mathematics achievement scores on standardized tests than did students in the traditional grade organization, even when both groups were taught by the same teacher."[6]

A third study cited in George and Lounsbury's review was conducted by an interdisciplinary team of three middle school teachers who stayed with the same 53 students through the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.[7] These teachers reported that the academic growth on a standardized test of basic skills for the multiyear students averaged 3.38 years compared with 2.95 years for the other eighth graders at the same school. While the study focused on a middle school program, it also included a follow-up survey with ninth graders. Self-reports and ninth-grade GPAs suggested that students who had been in the multiyear program had little or no difficulty adjusting to high school.

At the elementary level, Dennis Milburn reported a study in which he matched two similar Canadian schools, one with a traditional age-grade structure and one with a combination multiyear and multiage organization.[8] Although the study found little difference in most areas of basic skills achievement between students at the two schools, the multiyear/multiage students scored significantly higher than did the traditional group on reading vocabulary.

Milburn's study overlaps with the research literature on multiage classrooms and nongraded elementary schools (schools that group students flexibly by performance level rather than by age). This research, which we mention only briefly, is more extensive than the research on multiyear teaching alone. In some ways, nongraded and multiage classrooms hearken back to the one-room schoolhouse, and even today they are usually proposed for financial reasons rather than to provide for long-term student-teacher relationships. These approaches, nevertheless, are relevant to our discussion. Placing students from different grades in the same classroom often results in teachers working with at least a portion of these students for more than one year.

Studies that compare student achievement across graded and nongraded elementary schools frequently find little or no difference. However, reviews of this research suggest that academic benefits are found in certain types of nongraded schools. A review by Roberto Gutierrez and Robert E. Slavin concluded that research indicates consistent positive achievement effects for simple forms of nongraded school organization, such as cross-grade grouping in a single subject.[9] Simon Veenman reviewed studies in which the achievement effects of multiage elementary classrooms were compared with single-grade classrooms and found no significant differences between these two arrangements. Because this research failed to uncover negative as well as positive outcomes, Veenman concluded that "there is no empirical evidence for the assumption that student learning may suffer in multigrade and multi-age classrooms."[10] Linley Lloyd reached a similar conclusion for the achievement effects of multiage classrooms on high-ability students.[11]

When this achievement research is viewed as a whole, educators can feel reasonably confident that long-term student-teacher relationships will not hinder academic achievement. Whether such relationships improve student achievement, however, is a more difficult question to answer. A few studies point in this direction, but more extensive and longer-term research is needed to answer this question.

Learn about a middle school teacher's experience with "looping" by checking the website at www.middleweb.com/CSLV5Irvin.html.

Social Benefits

Because multiyear teaching emphasizes the continuity of relationships, we would assume that the social benefits of this approach are more direct than its academic benefits. Research on the non-academic effects of multiyear teaching supports this assumption. This research includes comparison studies that sought to measure the effects of multiyear teaching on student behavior and attitudes, as well as survey research on teacher, student, and parent perceptions of multiyear teaching.

Improved attendance and discipline are among those benefits of multiyear teaching reported most often by teachers and school officials. A school system in Attleboro, Massachusetts, for example, began a pilot program that assigned teachers to follow their classes for two years.[12] After expanding the program to all first- through eighth-grade classes, school superintendent Joseph Rappa reported an increase in student average daily attendance from 92% to 97%. Rappa also reported a decline in disciplinary actions, suspensions, and special education referrals, as well as a decline in staff absenteeism.[13] In a study of three-year student-teacher assignments, Daniel Burke also reported improved student attendance together with increased student involvement in school activities.[14]

The National Parent Information Network discusses some of the social and academic benefits of multiyear teacher-student groupings at npin.org/pnews/2000/pnew1100/int1100d.html.

Reports of improved discipline are cited in two additional studies. The first study was a year-long investigation conducted by Paul George.[15] Based on observations and interviews, he concluded that teachers involved in multiyear relationships were less likely to rely on formalized discipline structures. The other study to report findings in this area was Robert Lincoln's study of 400 seventh and eighth graders.[16] In addition to academic gains for multiyear students, Lincoln reported fewer discipline referrals.

Other researchers also have examined the relationship between long-term student-teacher relationships and student attitudes toward school. One of the first was Dennis Milburn's study comparing two similar elementary schools, one multiyear/multiage and the other a traditional school.[17] Students in the multiyear/multiage school were less likely than those in the traditional school to report a dislike for schoolwork or to say that they found school boring. Indirect evidence of positive attitudes toward school also is suggested in the findings of a study of students who had participated in a three-year middle school program called the Delta Project.[18] Following these students through high school, Nancy Mizelle found that students enrolled in the Delta Project were more likely to take higher level mathematics courses, stay in school and graduate on time, become involved in school activities, and be elected to positions of student leadership than were students who were not enrolled in the project.

The perceptions of teachers, students, and parents widely support the type of findings cited here. Teachers in a variety of studies reported that multiyear assignments allowed them to improve classroom discipline and forge stronger relationships with parents, better advise their students, and assume more responsibility for student learning.[19] Teachers in multiyear assignments also reported increased job satisfaction, which they most often attributed to seeing student growth and development over time.[20] Students tend to give multiyear assignments high marks as well, reporting that their multiple-year teachers are more caring, trusting, and patient.[21] The parents of students in multiyear programs have reported stronger confidence in multiyear teachers, feeling more respected by these teachers, and more likely to seek school assistance for their children.[22]

Similar perceptions were found in a national survey reported as part of the review by George and Lounsbury.[23] The purposes of the study were to identify the range of organizational patterns that middle schools were using to promote long-term student-teacher relationships and to describe the perceptions of those involved. Sixty schools were surveyed, of which 33 completed teacher, student, or parent questionnaires. Among those responding, one-third of the schools used multiyear teaching, while the rest used multiage groupings or some combination of approaches. There was widespread agreement among the teachers regarding the effects of multiyear teaching. Among the 105 teachers responding, 98% agreed that long-term relationships increased their knowledge of students; 90% agreed that these relationships allowed them to better observe continuous progress; 89% agreed that long-term relationships helped teachers build on the strengths of individual students; and 81% agreed that long-term relationships increased their persistence in working with at-risk students. A majority of the 1,100 student respondents agreed that long-term relationships had helped them make friends (72%) and get to know other students (78%), as well as to become better known by their teachers (69%). The 586 parents who completed questionnaires offered more mixed responses than did the teachers or students. However, 64% said that staying with the same teacher for more than one year had helped their children be more academically successful.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Although the body of literature we have reviewed is not large, it strongly supports renewed interest in the benefits of multiyear student-teacher relationships. We now want to broaden our discussion to other issues. In particular, we identify themes and research that connect multiyear teaching with contemporary work in the areas of student diversity, citizenship, and moral education.

Student Diversity

Our nation has always been diverse and is growing more so every day. For this reason, American educators are deeply interested in ways to promote positive interracial and multicultural relations. Researchers have long argued that the quality and persistence of relationships between people of different backgrounds are crucial factors in undermining racial stereotypes and discrimination.[24] Several studies that we cited earlier touch on this issue: Paul George found that students in multiyear classrooms indicated they were better able to establish friendships with students of other races and different backgrounds.[25] In Nancy Mizelle's study of the Delta Project, students who had stayed with the same teacher and class for three years described themselves in interviews as "more open-minded about different people," and less likely to judge other students on the basis of race.[26]

The broader literature on bilingual and multicultural education also draws specific attention to long-term student-teacher relationships. Deborah Meier, for example, an advocate and founder of several New York schools, regards multiyear relationships as one of the keys to sharing power and authority in the classroom.[27] A similar view is supported by recent research on the types of teaching strategies most effective with minority students and diverse populations.[28] These strategies revolve around teachers getting to know students both as individuals and as members of communities outside the classroom. Having faculty that are involved with their students and know them well are also among the most common features of successful schools in general.[29]

Some educators believe that multiyear teaching may be a solution to the retention vs. social promotion dilemma. Go to the website at www.ers.org/spectrum/spg99c.htm for details.

Citizenship and Moral Education

Equally strong are the potential contributions of multiyear teaching to citizenship and moral education. We have already alluded to connections with citizenship in reviewing the social benefits of long-term student-teacher relationships. Here we simply want to be more explicit. The term "citizenship education" may call to mind learning about civics, the branches of government, one's responsibility to vote, and so forth. Yet, in elementary education, "citizenship" has a broader meaning. It refers to civility rather than civics, to how people treat one another, to cooperation, attitudes, and a sense of community. There is no reason that citizenship, as it is broadly conceived in elementary schools, should not also carry through secondary schools and beyond.

Several writers have connected multiyear relationships with this broad sense of teaching for democracy.[30] Some also have suggested that such relationships are one of our best opportunities to prevent adolescent problems, such as suicide, gang membership, and school violence.[31] George H. Wood, in particular, argues that multiyear relationships allow students the time to make meaningful connections with a classroom, develop a sense of belonging, and assume greater responsibility for their own learning.[32] Several studies already cited report that multiyear relationships contribute to student and teacher perceptions of increased group

cooperation.[33] Finally, in a study of multiage kindergarten and first-grade classrooms, C. Kenneth Tanner and John D. Decotis found a positive relationship between this type of organization and 15 measures of citizenship, ranging from "accepts responsibility" to "shows courtesy and respect."[34]

Democratic values such as respect and community involvement clearly overlap with issues of moral education, and educators are now increasingly interested in these issues. Unlike the earlier days of "character education," however, contemporary scholars view moral development not simply as a matter of individual agency, but as a matter of relationships as well.[35] For this reason, scholars of moral education have taken a renewed interest in school and classroom organization.[36] Support for this interest is found in the literature cited here, particularly the studies by Paul George and John Lounsbury and Daniel Burke that connect multiyear teaching with increased perceptions of caring and student advocacy, as well as increased confidence in the teacher as an advisor.[37]

These studies suggest yet another reason for emphasizing multiyear relationships as a possible means to foster moral development. The characteristics of teaching we have just mentioned — caring, advocacy, and advisement — are not "services" that can be "delivered" to youngsters in the same way that teachers might be expected to deliver a prepackaged curriculum. Instead, they are dimensions of teaching that depend on modeling, trust, and a sensitivity to how others see the world — the very qualities of a relationship that require time to develop. To put this another way, the moral dimensions of teaching almost certainly imply deeper relationships than would otherwise be expected. Earlier we emphasized that people understandably may be concerned about the possible abuse of such relationships. The potential for influence is both good and bad. Moral education, however, does not mean giving teachers a license to "preach." Stephanie Coontz stressed the importance of this distinction.[38] Citing decades of social research, Coontz points out that a leading factor in the success of at-risk students is "the intervention of just one caring person from outside the family." She adds, "That person's role is not to moralize or even to motivate, but to get involved in the child's life."[39]

CONCLUSION

We want to close on a final point related to the benefits of multiyear teaching. Overall, the findings of research should encourage those with the desire and commitment to undertake this approach. Just as clear is the implication that multiyear teaching ups the ante when it comes to the importance of good teachers. Like most other school reforms, multiyear teaching will fail unless skilled and caring individuals carry it out. At the same time, those who argue this position should recognize that it is not an either/or proposition. Just as keeping teachers and students together longer demands the best from teachers, opportunities to make a difference in the lives of children will help attract capable people into the profession. And once in the profession, these people are more likely to stay if schools are organized in ways that genuinely support their work.

ENDNOTES

1. Our review focuses on studies of elementary and secondary education. However, for a study of a university teacher education program that includes multiyear relationships, see Susan M. Klein, Thomas Gregory, and Melody Shank, "Intentional Communities of Practice in Teacher Education: The Example of a Community of Teachers" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, November 2000).
2. Nel Noddings, "An Ethic of Care and Its Implications for Instructional Arrangements," *American Journal of Education* 96, no. 2 (1988): 215-30; Nel Noddings, "Caring and Continuity in Education," *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 35, no. 1 (1991): 3-12; Nel Noddings, *The Challenge to Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992); Nel Noddings, "Learning to Care and Be Cared For," in *Schools, Violence, and Society*, edited by Allan Hoffman (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996), 184-98.
3. Edward A. Wynne and Herbert J. Walberg, "Persisting Groups: An Overlooked Force for Learning," *Phi Delta Kappan* 75, no. 7 (1994): 527-28, 30.
4. Paul S. George and John H. Lounsbury, *Making Big Schools Feel Small: Multiage Grouping, Looping, and Schools-Within-a-School* (Westerville, Ohio: National Middle School Association, 2000).
5. Robert D. Lincoln, "Looping: A Matter of Time and Relationships," *Journal of the New England League of Middle Schools* (Spring 1999): 7-11.
6. Daniel L. Burke, "Looping: Adding Time, Strengthening Relationships" (Washington, D.C.: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, December 1997) Digest, ERIC, ED 414098, page 2.
7. C. Brown, C. Buhler, and V. Morrison, "Student-Teacher Progression . . . Together for Every Step" (paper presented at the annual conference of the Georgia Middle School Association, Atlanta, February 2000).
8. Dennis Milburn, "A Study of Multi-Age or Family-Grouped Classrooms," *Phi Delta Kappan* 62, no. 7 (1981): 513-14.
9. Roberto Gutierriz and Robert E. Slavin, "Achievement Effects of the Nongraded Elementary School: A Best Evidence Synthesis," *Review of Educational Research* 62, no. 4 (1992): 333-76.
10. Simon Veenman, "Cognitive and Noncognitive Effects of Multigrade and Multi-Age Classes: A Best-Evidence Synthesis," *Review of Educational Research* 65, no. 4 (1995): 319.
11. Linley Lloyd, "Multi-Age Classes and High Ability Students," *Review of Educational Research* 69, no. 2 (1999): 187-212.
12. Barbara Hanson, "Getting to Know You — Multiyear Teaching," *Educational Leadership* 53, no. 3 (1995): 42-43.
13. Char Forsten et al., *Looping Q&A; 72 Practical Answers to Your Most Pressing Questions* (Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1997), 31.
14. Daniel L. Burke, "Multi-Year Teacher/Student Relationships Are a Long Overdue Arrangement," *Phi Delta Kappan* 77, no. 5 (1996): 360-61.
15. Paul S. George, *Long-Term Teacher/Student Relationships: A Middle School Case Study* (Columbus, Ohio: National Middle School Association, 1987).
16. Lincoln, 8.
17. Milburn, 514.
18. Nancy B. Mizelle, "Classroom Structures and Student Motivation: A Study of the Delta Project: (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, April 1993).
19. For teacher reports on the effects of multiyear teaching on discipline and parent involvement, see George and Lounsbury, 69; Paul S. George, Melody Spruel, and Jan Moorefield, *Lincoln Middle School: A Case Study of Long-Term Relationships* (Columbus, Ohio: National Middle School Association, 1987). For teacher reports on the effects of multiyear teaching on advising students, see George and Lounsbury, 70. For teacher reports about taking responsibility for student learning, see Burke, "Looping," 2.
20. Paul S. George and Lynn L. Oldaker, *Evidence for the Middle School* (Columbus, Ohio: National Middle School Association, 1985), 11.

To see a literature review on multiage teaching, visit the website at www.coe.ilstu.edu/jabraun/students/mlbeck.

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Nel Noddings is Lee L. Jacks Professor of Education at Stanford University. She has taught at the elementary, secondary, and college levels and has served as acting dean of the School of Education at Stanford University. In addition to many articles and reviews on a broad range of educational issues, her works include: *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education; Awakening the Inner Eye: Intuition in Education* (coauthored with Paul Shore); *Women and Evil; Constructivist Views on the Teaching and Learning of Mathematics* (coedited with Carolyn Maher and Robert Davis); *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education* (coedited with Carol Witherell); *The Challenge to Care in Schools; and Educating for Intelligent Belief and Unbelief.*

David J. Flinders is associate professor of education at Indiana University, Bloomington. His research interests focus on secondary education, curriculum, instructional supervision, and school restructuring. His books include *Responsive Teaching: An Ecological Approach to Classroom Patterns of Language, Culture, and Thought* (coauthored with C. A. Bowers); *Theory and Concepts in Qualitative Research* (coedited with Geoffrey Mills); and *The Curriculum Studies Reader* (coedited with Stephen Thornton).

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